

THAT WHICH IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A cryptographic device comprising:
a cryptographic module and a communications module
removably coupled thereto;
said cryptographic module comprising
a first housing,
a user network interface carried by said
first housing,
a cryptographic processor carried by said
first housing and coupled to said user network
interface, and
a first connector carried by said first
housing and coupled to said cryptographic
processor;
said communications module comprising
a second housing,
a second connector carried by said second
housing and being removably mateable with said
first connector of said cryptographic module,
a network interface carried by said second
housing and coupled to said second connector, and
at least one logic device for cooperating
with said cryptographic processor to determine a
status of said communications module.

2. The cryptographic device of Claim 1 wherein
said communications module comprises a predetermined one
from among a plurality of interchangeable communications
modules each for communicating over a different
communications media.

3. The cryptographic device of Claim 1 wherein a status of said communications module comprises at least one of a type of communications module and an operating status thereof.

4. The cryptographic device of Claim 1 wherein said at least one logic device also permits said cryptographic processor to configure said network communications interface of said communications module.

5. The cryptographic device of Claim 1 wherein said communications module further comprises at least one status indicator carried by said second housing and coupled to said at least one logic device.

6. The cryptographic device of Claim 1 wherein said at least one logic device comprises a complex programmable logic device (CPLD).

7. The cryptographic device of Claim 1 wherein said network communications interface comprises at least one of a wireless LAN (WLAN) communication circuit, a wireline communication circuit, and a fiber optic communication circuit.

8. The cryptographic device of Claim 1 wherein said user network interface comprises an Ethernet Local Area Network (LAN) interface, and wherein said network communications interface comprises a network LAN interface.

9. The cryptographic device of Claim 1 wherein said cryptographic processor comprises:

a host network processor coupled to said user network interface; and

a cryptography circuit coupled to said host network processor.

10. The cryptographic device of Claim 9 wherein said cryptographic processor further comprises:

an unencrypted data buffer circuit coupled between said user network interface and said cryptography circuit; and

an encrypted data buffer circuit coupled between said cryptography circuit and said network communications interface.

11. The cryptographic device of Claim 1 wherein said cryptographic module further comprises a tamper circuit for disabling said cryptographic processor based upon tampering with said first housing.

12. The cryptographic device of Claim 11 wherein said tamper circuit comprises at least one conductor substantially surrounding said cryptographic processor, and wherein said cryptographic processor is disabled based upon a break in said at least one conductor.

13. A cryptographic device comprising:

a cryptographic module and a communications module removably coupled thereto;

said cryptographic module comprising

a first housing,
 a user Local Area Network (LAN) interface
 carried by said first housing,
 a cryptographic processor carried by said
 first housing and coupled to said user LAN
 interface, and
 a first connector carried by said first
 housing and coupled to said cryptographic
 processor;
 said communications module comprising
 a second housing,
 a second connector carried by said second
 housing and being removably mateable with said
 first connector of said cryptographic module,
 a network LAN interface carried by said
 second housing and coupled to said second
 connector, and
 at least one logic device for cooperating
 with said cryptographic processor to determine at
 least one of a type of communications module and
 an operating status thereof, said at least one
 logic device also permitting said cryptographic
 processor to configure said network LAN interface.

14. The cryptographic device of Claim 13 wherein
 said communications module comprises a predetermined one
 from among a plurality of interchangeable communications
 modules each for communicating over a different
 communications media.

15. The cryptographic device of Claim 13 wherein said communications module further comprises at least one status indicator carried by said second housing and coupled to said at least one logic device.

16. The cryptographic device of Claim 13 wherein said at least one logic device comprises a complex programmable logic device (CPLD).

17. The cryptographic device of Claim 13 wherein said network LAN interface comprises at least one of a wireless LAN (WLAN) communication circuit, a wireline LAN communication circuit, and a fiber optic LAN communication circuit.

18. The cryptographic device of Claim 13 wherein said user LAN interface comprises an Ethernet interface.

19. The cryptographic device of Claim 13 wherein said cryptographic processor comprises:

a host network processor coupled to said user LAN interface; and

a cryptography circuit coupled to said host network processor.

20. The cryptographic device of Claim 19 wherein said cryptographic processor further comprises:

an unencrypted data buffer circuit coupled between said user LAN interface and said cryptography circuit; and

an encrypted data buffer circuit coupled between said cryptography circuit and said network LAN interface.

21. The cryptographic device of Claim 13 wherein said cryptographic module further comprises a tamper circuit for disabling said cryptographic processor based upon tampering with said first housing.

22. The cryptographic device of Claim 21 wherein said tamper circuit comprises at least one conductor substantially surrounding said cryptographic processor, and wherein said cryptographic processor is disabled based upon a break in said at least one conductor.

23. A communications method comprising:

coupling a cryptographic module to a network device, the cryptographic module comprising a first housing, a user network interface carried by the first housing, a cryptographic processor carried by the first housing and coupled to the user network interface, and a first connector carried by the first housing and coupled to the cryptographic processor;

providing a communications module comprising a second housing, a second connector carried by the second housing, a network LAN interface carried by the second housing and coupled to the second connector, and at least one logic device carried by the second housing and coupled to the second connector, the second connector of the communications module being removably mated with the first connector of the cryptographic module;

using the network LAN interface to communicate with a network; and

causing the at least one logic device to cooperate with the cryptographic processor to determine a status of the communications module.

24. The method of Claim 23 wherein the communications module comprises a predetermined one from among a plurality of interchangeable communications modules each for communicating over a different communications media.

25. The method of Claim 23 wherein a status of the communications module comprises at least one of a type of communications module and an operating status thereof.

26. The method of Claim 23 further comprising using the at least one logic device to configure the network communications interface of the communications module.

27. A communications system comprising:
a plurality of network devices coupled together to define a network, and a cryptographic device coupled to at least one of said network devices;

said cryptographic device comprising a cryptographic module coupled to said at least one network device, and a communications module removably coupled to said cryptographic module;

said cryptographic module comprising

a first housing,

a user network interface carried by said first housing,

a cryptographic processor carried by said first housing and coupled to said user network interface, and

a first connector carried by said first housing and coupled to said cryptographic processor;

said communications module comprising

a second housing,

a second connector carried by said second housing and being removably mateable with said first connector of said cryptographic module,

a network communications interface carried by said second housing and coupled to said second connector, and

at least one logic device for cooperating with said cryptographic processor to determine a status of said communications module.

28. The communications system of Claim 27 wherein said communications module comprises a predetermined one from among a plurality of interchangeable communications modules each for communicating over a different communications media.

29. The communications system of Claim 27 wherein a status of said communications module comprises at least one of a type of communications module and an operating status thereof.

30. The communications system of Claim 27 wherein said at least one logic device also permits said

cryptographic processor to configure said network communications interface of said communications module.

31. The communications system of Claim 27 wherein said communications module further comprises at least one status indicator carried by said second housing and coupled to said at least one logic device.

32. The communications system of Claim 27 wherein said at least one logic device comprises a complex programmable logic device (CPLD).

33. The communications system of Claim 27 wherein said network communications interface comprises at least one of a wireless LAN (WLAN) communication circuit, a wireline communication circuit, and a fiber optic communication circuit.

34. The communications system of Claim 27 wherein said user network interface comprises an Ethernet Local Area Network (LAN) interface, and wherein said network interface comprises a network LAN interface.